

AN UNACCREDITED ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S LIFE HISTORY IN PERSPECTIVE OF THE PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE FORMING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to understand the process of practical knowledge formation through an Unaccredited Alternative School principal's life history and to study the characteristics and phenomena of the alternative school education.

If Alternative Schools were to be defined as a "pursuit of a new education" unlike existing institutional education, for those who are isolated either from inside or outside of the mainstream standard institutionalized educational system, these schools mean much more than merely learning itself. They are for instance ideologies and practices etc. in pursuit of a new society. Therefore, regardless of its shapes and forms, the alternative schools possess important meanings in both educational theories as well as the practices.

The school operation, more than anything, is depended upon a principal who has the full responsibility of the school. By law, the principal heads up the school affairs, directs, and monitors associated teachers and is the ultimate decision maker in school administration to educate students. Regarding the administration of the school operation, the principal rely on his practical knowledge reflecting his own philosophies and values.

However, since the practical knowledge don't get formed at once, it is essential to study how the practical knowledge was formed through the life history process. In addition, unlike standard schools and specialized alternative schools, Unaccredited Alternative Schools require much more independent decisions from principals in administrating school operations since they are much freer from government sponsors and monitoring.

For this reason, this research has selected the Unaccredited Alternative School Principal as the research participant and conducted chronological analysis of the life history in the following phases: the childhood, the youth, during college, after college until becoming the principal, and finally during the principal phase.

This life history study, by relying on a careful listening of the participant's voice, focuses mainly on sociological interpretation of the individual's life as well as on the panoramic aspect of time-ness in a life story. Moreover, the study does not only rely completely on the relationship between the researchers and the participants, but also bases its foundation in confidence and mutual interaction. In order to understand what experiences contributed in forming the Unaccredited Alternative School Principals' practical knowledge, four Unaccredited Alternative School Principals were chosen as the study participants and conducted in-depth interview processes to collect the data. The Repeated Comparative Analysis of Merriam(2009) was applied in analysis of the data.

The result of the research has confirmed that the Unaccredited Alternative School Principal's unique practical knowledge was contributed and formed by variety of experiences throughout the life time. This practical knowledge formed in this manner, although mostly is in a personal in nature, was influenced from socio-historic background in that period in time. And, in school, through the students, teachers, and parents' of the students, it influences the establishment of the operational processes as well as instilling its cultures at school.

KEYWORDS: Unaccredited Alternative School Principal, Alternative Education, Practical Knowledge, Life History

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INTRODUCTION

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

What alternative school pursues is a new form of school, education and society which overcomes the problems of the present school. Alternative education is the result of effort to find the essence of education by people who believe that there are serious problems in present education. They are striving to find essence of education. However, there is no such agreed notion and the character of alternative and the character of alternative school is defined differently depend on the time period, nation and scholars.

Smith (1976) defined alternative schools as various forms of school that emerged as they are against uniform education. The character of alternative school gives free choice to students, parents and teachers maintaining active participation, flexible setting of educational objectives, and flexible organization with about 200 students. These are characters of alternative school which emerged in America after 1960s. Barr(1981) explained alternative school as school with various forms of learning, open education, tailored teaching, empirical learning. Cooper (1994) defined alternative school as school which tries different experience from normal public school and has special teaching method and educational activities for students and parents.

As alternative school is defined as school which pursues new education which is different from exiting education in present system, alternative school is not merely learning for people alienated from formal education such as perusing and practicing new society. Therefore, alternative school has significant meaning in both education theory and practice regardless of its form.

Also, operating school depends on the principal who takes responsibility of one school. Principal is legally in charge of school affairs, guide and monitor faculty members, and educate the students. That is, the principal is final decision maker. The principal operates school according to one's belief and value. However, such practical knowledge is not done one-time process. Therefore it is necessary to research how one's practical knowledge has been formed through one's life time. Especially, in unauthorized alternative school, unauthorized alternative school allows much free decision making of principal in operating school. For that reason, it is significantly important to explore the process of practical knowledge formation in lifelong period.

The concept is called practical knowledge, working knowledge, craft knowledge or tacit knowledge. It means the knowledge for teaching something to students in classroom. The practical knowledge is formed by reflect of experience and reflective thinking. It is concept that includes knowledge, faith and attitude. (Marland, 1997).

According to Elbaz (1981), practical knowledge means reconstructed knowledge based on one's own faith and value interacting with students, co-teacher, educational administer and expert in the process of educating. In other words, practical knowledge is right for problem solving in real situation because it is formed through in real context of educating students.

Therefore, it has significant meaning to understand practical knowledge in understanding principal's unique education ideology through personal life. As people has different frame according to the context of their society they are living, each principal has different meaning of various events and experience related to school operation. Therefore,

principal's sex, growth process, and various meetings and experience should be significantly considered. Also, practical knowledge is formed through reflect of experience in real context (Han SooMin, 2014). Therefore, it is not formed in short time period. Therefore, to know individuals' practical knowledge, it is necessary to understand individuals' process of lives.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method is to understand life experience and process through in-depth interview. This is accomplished by mutual interaction between researcher and participants. Therefore participants are not simply subjects or responders that are for getting data. As time goes by, they make mutual relationship as sympathetic beings. Therefore, this research method has meanings in that participants have their status and sense of existence as main bodies who make history (Casey, 1992: 188-189).

Table 1: The Character of Research Participants (2015 year August)

Research Participant	Age	Sex	Work Experience Before Becoming Principal	Total Work Experience
			Work Experience as Principal of Alternative School	
participant A	47	F	Education Tutor 10 Year/Cooperative Child Care 1year	22years
			Representative of Alternative School Teacher 11years	
participant B	51	M	Public School Teacher 22years	27 years
			Principal of Alternative School 5years	
participant C	61	M	Public School Teacher 15years /Cooperative Child Care 1year	31 years
			Principal of Alternative School 14years	
participant D	48	M	Alternative School Teacher 14years/Research Manger 2years	19 years
			Principal of Alternative School 3years	

THE RESULTS

From the perspective of socialization, childhood and adolescence period are affected primarily from primary level of socialization when forming their identity and personality. Especially in the case of participant A, The A wanted to be a teacher because of the impact of A's father. Also, The A experienced serious conflict in inner side because of A's mother and father has totally different viewpoint. Participant B could build good study habit with help of B's mother's compliment and encouragement.

According to Cooley(1909), meeting with people such as parents, family, relatives and peer group become core foundation when forming view of value. Marchand, Schedler & Wagstaff (2004) tells that the way of fostering their children give significant impact on them in the stage of babyhood which is the utmost importance developing period. Considering such perspective, forming relationship with parents and friend in same age group is significantly important. It can also be said that study participants were affected by their parents, family, and friends. Not only that, they all have many memories and experience of adolescent period in school which is second socialization institute. Teachers and friends are main members of school.

Relationship with teacher not only helps with getting knowledge, but forming characteristic. Positive

self-conception during adolescence period is main characteristic that decide individuals' social behavior and rule as well as developing personality and positive self-realization.(Kim, koangOng 2007). Self-conception that is teacher's knowledge about students gives impact on students' self-conception (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985: 250). Participants still remember the experience of impersonal act, discrimination, prejudice of their teachers as well as kind and warm caring, positive encouragement. It was identified that those experience identity of themselves and teachers.

Second, research participants mostly have firm identity finding themselves during their university year. University is not simply educational institute. It is huge organization linked to various interested parties such as professors, faculty members, alumnus, central and local government (Hall & Baker, 2003).

According to Sung & Yang (2009), university experience give significant impact on their future path and world view formation. Participant A has experience of political activities in citizen organization, Participant B participates in teachers' mission group, Participant C participated in a movement for democracy, and participant D has experience of circle and self-exploring. It can be said that such experiences affect their self-identity, teachers' identity and practical knowledge formation. Such various experiences of study, student council and circle activity, volunteer work and part time work is accumulated in terms of social, intellectual, and emotional aspect and forms its practical knowledge.

Third, it is commonly used the saying "the quality of teaching cannot superior to that of teacher" when define specialty of education. That is, the responsible school operation possibly can affect not only teachers and students in school but local community. Therefore, principal's specialty can be seen as the result of experience presented through principal's growth process. Especially, principals in unauthorized alternative school have nothing to do with qualification standard in [Private School Act]. Therefore, their experience before becoming principal can be different from that of normal schools.

Among the participants, principal A has work experience in supplementary educational institute, cooperative child care center. Principal D has work experience of teaching in alternative school for a long time and teens training center. Participants B and C graduated from school of education and teacher's college and taught in normal public school.

However, before becoming principal in alternative school, participant A had a dream of establishing school while studying in graduate school and constant activity in teachers' mission group. Participant C was fascinated in alternative education through the education meeting and cooperative child care center. It can be said that they have various career and work experience. However, they all have education related work. Those experiences seem to help them establish identity as professions and principals as well as individuals.

Forth, principals' practical knowledge has unique and contextual characteristic. That is, in real life context, it has been form and it can be used in daily context. Study participants take responsibility in general operation of the school. According to Black & Halliwell(2000)와 Rushton (2004), principal need information and ability to solve various problems happens in school as well as knowledge to solve and adjust conflict on the spot.

The study participants all actively participate in community activities to bond with local community people. They applied for making hope community and get support from the government and invite lecturer to operate academy leading to constant communication with local community.

Since alternative school is unauthorized, there are not such support or monitor like teachers training, duty training. With this reason, they have regular meeting such as 'alternative education meeting' and 'Christian alternative education group meeting' which are based on alternative education consultative group. They also share information about teachers

training and development of alternative school. Not only that, they keep striving to develop themselves and education by studying with nature science through environment citizen group, teachers mission training and study psychology of Adler.

CONCLUSIONS

When looked into those experience and example of the participant, they have sense of heavy responsibility, constantly challenge and show vision for the better school future after they become principal. Like this, study participants' practical knowledge can be seen as practical one that has been internalized and interpreted with various experiences in their life time.

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